

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for rendering images, comprising:

receiving from a client a render job having an associated job profile and a plurality of frames in an animation sequence;

determining whether the render job is to be handled at a site local to the client or at a site remote from the client, the determination being based on an indication provided by the render job or processing availability at the site local to the client;

distributing via a communications medium a first frame of the animation sequence to a first one of a plurality of render servers and a second frame of the animation sequence to a second one of the plurality of render servers based at least in part on the job profile, the first and second frames being different;

rendering the first and second frames concurrently at the first and second render servers;

forwarding the rendered first and second frames to a network storage system for retrieval by the client;

providing one or more samples of the rendered first or second frames for the render job to the client prior to completion of rendering the first or second frame by the first and second servers;

receiving an input from the client in response to the one or more samples, the input requesting that the render job is to be canceled prior to completion of rendering the first or second frame by the first and second servers.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein receiving from a client the render job comprises receiving the render job from a computer remote from the plurality of render servers.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein distributing the first and second frames comprises distributing the first and second frames by a scheduler, the scheduler operable to determine which of the plurality of render servers are capable of rendering the first and second frames.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 3, wherein the scheduler is operable to determine which of the plurality of render servers are capable of rendering the first and second frames by accessing a database storing the capabilities of each of the plurality of render servers.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the capabilities database stores the type of rendering package associated with each of the plurality of render servers.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the capabilities database stores a processing status for each of the plurality of the render servers.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, and further comprising transmitting the rendered first and second frames to the client.

8. (Currently Amended) A system for rendering images, comprising:

a resource database comprising resource information regarding a plurality of render servers; and

a schedule server coupled to the plurality of render servers via a communications medium, the schedule server operable to receive a render job from a client, the render job having an associated job profile and a plurality of image frames in a sequence, the scheduler operable to determine whether the render job is to be handled at a site local to the client or at a site remote from the client, the determination being based on an indication provided by the render job or processing availability at the site local to the client, the schedule server operable to distribute a first frame of the sequence to a first one of a plurality of render servers based on a comparison of the job profile and the resource information, the schedule server operable to provide one or more samples of the rendered first frame received from the first one of the plurality of render servers for the render job to the client prior to completion of rendering the first frame by the first one of the plurality of render servers, the schedule server operable to receive an input from the client in response to the one or more samples, the input requesting that the render job is to be canceled prior to completion of rendering the first or second frame by the first and second servers.

9. (Original) The system of Claim 8, wherein the resource information comprises the type of rendering package associated with each of the plurality of render servers.

10. (Original) The system of Claim 8, wherein the resource information comprises a processing status for each of the plurality of render servers.

11. (Original) The system of Claim 8, wherein the schedule server is operable to determine whether a particular one of the render servers is capable of rendering a particular render job.

12. (Original) The system of Claim 8, wherein the resource database further comprises resource information regarding a plurality of render hosts associated with respective ones of the render servers.

13. (Original) The system of Claim 12, wherein the resource information comprises hardware configuration information regarding the render hosts.

14. (Currently Amended) A system for providing distributed rendering servers comprising:

a local rendering system operable to receive from a client a render job having a plurality of frames in an animation sequence, the local rendering system operable to determine whether the render job is to be handled at the local rendering system, the determination being based on an indication provided by the render job or processing availability at the local rendering system; and

at least one remote rendering system comprising a plurality of remote render servers and operable to:

receive from the local rendering system the render job in response to the local rendering system determining that the render job is to be handled remotely;

distribute a first frame of the sequence to a first one of the plurality of remote render servers and a second frame of the sequence to a second one of the plurality of remote render servers, the first and second frames being different;

render the first and second frames concurrently at the first and second remote render servers; and

return a result of the render job to the local rendering system;

wherein the remote rendering system is operable to provide one or more samples of the rendered first or second frames for the render job to the local rendering system prior to completion of rendering of the first or second frame by the remote rendering system, wherein the remote rendering system is operable to receive an input from the client in response to the one or more samples, the input requesting that the render job is to be canceled prior to completion of rendering the first or second frame by the first and second servers.

15. (Original) The system of Claim 14, wherein the local rendering system comprises:

a plurality of render servers operable to render a render job having an associated job profile;

a resource database comprising resource information regarding the plurality of render servers; and

a schedule server coupled to the render server via a communications medium and operable to distribute the render job to one or more of a plurality of render servers based on a comparison of the job profile and the resource information.

16. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 14, wherein the remote rendering system comprises:

a resource database comprising resource information regarding the plurality of render servers; and

a schedule server coupled to the remote render servers via a communications medium and operable to distribute the render job to at least the first and second remote render servers based on a comparison of the job profile and the resource information.

17. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 16, wherein the resource information comprises the type of rendering package associated with each of the plurality of remote render servers.

18. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 16, wherein the resource information comprises a processing status for each of the plurality of remote render servers.

19. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 16, wherein the schedule server is operable to determine whether a particular one of the remote render servers is capable of rendering a particular render job.

20. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 16, wherein the resource database further comprises resource information regarding a plurality of render hosts associated with respective ones of the remote render servers.

21. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for rendering images comprising:

receiving a render job having a plurality of frames in an animation sequence from a client at a first rendering site;

determining whether the render job is to be handled at the first rendering site, the determination being based on an indication provided by the render job or processing availability at the first rendering site;

transferring the render job from the first rendering site to a second rendering site in response to the first rendering site determining that the render job is to be handled remotely, the second rendering site located remote from the first rendering site and comprising a plurality of remote render servers;

distributing a first frame of the sequence to a first one of the plurality of remote render servers and a second frame of the sequence to a second one of the plurality of remote render servers, wherein the first and second frames are different;

rendering the first and second frames concurrently at the first and second remote render servers;

providing one or more samples of the rendered first or second frames for the render job to the client prior to completion of rendering of the first or second frames by the first and second remote servers;

receiving an input from the client in response to the one or more samples, the input requesting that the render job is to be canceled prior to completion of rendering the first or second frame by the first and second servers.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, and further comprising transmitting the rendered first and second frames to the client.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, and further comprising transmitting the rendered first and second frames from the second render site to the first render site.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, and further comprising storing the rendered first and second frames in a location accessible by the client.

25. (Original) The method of Claim 21, wherein the first rendering site comprises:

a plurality of render servers operable to render a render job having an associated job profile;

a resource database comprising resource information regarding the plurality of render servers; and

a schedule server coupled to the render server via a communications medium and operable to distribute the render job to one or more of a plurality of render servers based on a comparison of the job profile and the resource information.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 21, wherein the second rendering site comprises:

a resource database comprising resource information regarding the plurality of render servers; and

a schedule server coupled to the remote render servers via a communications medium and operable to distribute the render job to at least the first and second remote render servers based on a comparison of the job profile and the resource information.

27. (Original) The method of Claim 21, and further comprising transferring files associated with the render job from the first site to the second site, the associated files being necessary to render the render job.

28. (Original) The method of Claim 27, wherein the associated files comprise a texture file.

29. (Original) The method of Claim 21, and further comprising notifying, by the second rendering site, the first rendering site when the render job has been rendered.